Pacific Northwest Railroad Archive

Northwest News

ARCHIVES ACTIVITIES FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2024

PNRA has participated in GiveBIG, Seattle's annual day of support for local nonprofit organizations since 2013, and in that time it has evolved into the primary focus of our fundraising efforts every year.

Our Vision: Promote world-wide access to Pacific Northwest railroad heritage.

Our Mission: Provide a permanent institution for the preservation of railroad records from the greater Pacific Northwest area and make them accessible over the Internet.

Your gift of support enables us to continue our important work making the railroad history of the Pacific Northwest available to anyone in the world through our website and online collections, and providing us with the resources that we need to preserve and organize the original materials of a physical archive that continues to expand through donations from other organizations and private collectors.

We have grown in this past year. In addition to taking in and processing a large number of additional historical materials, we now have six member-Rail Heritage Organizations (RHOs):

- **Boeing Employee Model Railroad Club has dedicated space for their HO-scale layout.**
- **Cascade Rail Foundation representing the Milwaukee Road in Washington State**
- **Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad**
- **Great Northern Railway Historical Society**
- **Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association**
- **Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway Historical Society**

We invite you to become a Friend of PNRA this May during GiveBIG. Supporters become a Friend of PNRA by making a donation of at least $30 a year or by contributing 30 hours of volunteer time. The generosity of money and time that the Friends of PNRA provide is key to our ongoing success as an archive.

Benefits for Friends of PNRA:

- Quarterly updates on PNRA activity through issues of the Northwest News newsletter.
- Priority access to research sources as they become available from Archive collections.
- Early notice of opportunities to participate in helping PNRA reach preservation goals.

PNRA is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and our Federal taxpayer ID is 27-1315373.

The donation process is very easy. You can visit our website (pnrarchive.org), mail us a check, or give through the GiveBIG platform.

PNRA receives support from 4 CULTURE

Upcoming Events:

April 24, 11:00am - Jack Christensen:The NP's Tacoma Connection. *Highline Heritage Museum & Online*
April 24, 1:00pm - Gary Tarbox: NP Steam Passenger Power Dev. *Highline Heritage Museum & Online*

April 27 - Archive Spring Cleaning Event *PNRA*

May 8, 1:00pm - Russell Holter: Immigrant Work For the NP *Online*

May 22, 1:00pm Cristy Lake: What's New at NW Railroad Museum? *Online*

May 25, 10:00am - Cascade Rail Foundation: Sequiminar revisited *Highline Heritage Museum*

June 5, 1:00pm - Dan Hegstad: The Making of the Video "History of the Northern Pacific Railway" *Online*

June 19, 1:00pm - J. Craig Thorpe: The Railroad Art Scene *Online*

Northwest News
Russell Holter ..... Board President
Richard Wilkens ..... Director of Collections
Virginia Wright ..... Editor, Interim Executive Director

COLLECTIONS

First Quarter Collections Update

by Richard Wilkens

FOBNR Collection – Work has begun on integrating Burlington Northern material from the PNRA into the Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad (FOBNR) collection which are now a member of the PNRA. On January 28th a POD shipped from St. Paul containing the FOBNR Archives arrived in Burien. With the help of Rich Wilkens, Bob Kelly and Aric Van de Vord the collection was unloaded in a timely manner and was placed on shelving. Over the past few months planning was developed on the best method to integrate the numerous items of BN material that Kurt Armbruster has worked to identify and to transfer it into the FOBNR archives. On April 4th Aric Van de Vord began the first steps of the integration by working on the various rule books and instruction manuals.

Aric Van de Vord of Friends of Burlington Northern Railroad with rule books and instruction manuals

SP&SRHS Collection – Work is continuing by the SP&S Railway Historical Society to integrate the material donated by the Pacific Northwest Chapter – National Railway Historical Society last September. While most of the approximately 250 boxes of material are SP&S related it also contains many boxes of material from the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, Oregon, California & Eastern, Camas Prairie and Burlington Northern. When the original SP&S collection arrived ten years ago it contained a good amount of non-SP&S items that were originally in the same series as this new material. These files have now been pulled and merged with this new material. This work has primarily been handled by Richard Wilkens and the SP&S file series already integrated consists of those from the Superintendent,

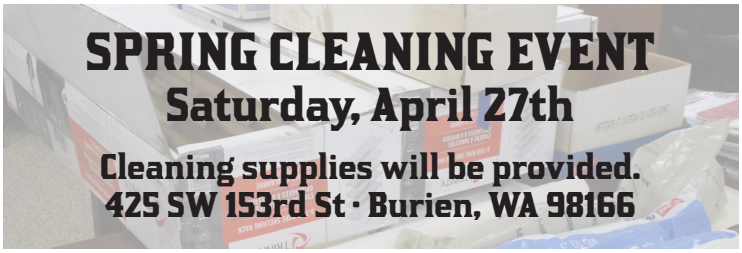
Collections materials from Friends of the Burlington Northern Railroad (FOBNR) arrived at the archives in a POD container, which was delivered to the back of the building and unpacked by PNRA volunteers and representatives from FOBNR.

General Manager, Vice-President and President.

Electric Railway Collection – One of the collections that is not part of one of the RHO's is the collection of Pacific Northwest electric railway material. The vast majority of this collection is the photographs collected by Warren Wing over his lifetime along with other photos and material from other donors. Mike Bergman has been working on organizing these photos.

Boeing Employee Model Railroad Club Library – While the PNRA has an extensive library the Boeing Employee Model Railroad Club also has a collection of books and magazines. Most of their books had been offsite but are now at the archives and BEMRC members Tim Repp and John Thompson have been working to catalog them. As to the magazines, Richard Wilkens of the PNRA worked with the BEMRC to help organize their collection which has some early model magazines dating back to the 1930's.

Northern Pacific Material – Kurt Armbruster has been working to identify the various items of Northern Pacific material within the Jim Fredrickson and John Phillips collections. Chuck Soule is continuing his work on the Northern Pacific Joint Facility books as well as aerial photographs.



PNRA Welcomes Three New Board Members

Byron Osborn

Byron grew up in Alabama in a town along the Southern Railway. He has been a member of the Boeing Employees Model Railroad Club since it was formed in 1980. He has been the President for the last ten years. Like most in the hobby he started with a Lionel train set. After high school and college he entered into the U.S. Army for 6 years. He worked for Boeing after the Army. His interest for railroads has always been there, He is retired and very active in the Model RR hobby.

Jessie Cunningham

Jessie Cunningham has visited PNRA on a few occasions over the years to do research. She has a BA in history and a Master in Teaching at the secondary level. She worked for the Northwest Railway Museum for 14 years, originally managing volunteers and education programs. In that capacity, and later as the Deputy Director, she researched and wrote all exhibits for the organization. From artifact signage to special topics like the Wellington Remembered project, which won the AKCHO Exhibit Award in 2010, she did it all from start to finish. She used PNRA images in several of her exhibits.

She left NRM in December of 2019 and is currently working in nonprofit administration. In her current role she manages facilities, security, and HR for a multi-campus reform synagogue. She has experience with building systems, security enhancements, and grant administration. It is challenging work but she misses the process of research and writing exhibits for the public. She is interested in staying connected to railway history so the opportunity to serve on the PNRA board is a good fit. Jessie lives in North Bend, WA.

Peter D. Ferch

Peter is a member of a three-person group who manages the FOBNR archives, responds to inquiries, and accepts donations to the group. He has been a member of the FOBNR group since 1999, but has been interested in and collecting things related to the BN since the '80s. He lives in a suburb of Minneapolis, MN and is about five miles from the BN humpyard – Northtown. He quasi-maintains a database of equipment used by the BN, Engines, Freight cars and MOW equipment – including diagrams and dispositions. He also collects memorabilia relating to the BN – anything the railroad put out, stuff to its employees, clients or general public during open houses.

Jack Christensen Reflects on a Life in the Railroad

In January PNRA and Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association hosted the first in a series of presentations on railroad history by Jack Christensen and PNRA's Founding Executive Director Gary Tarbox. The first talk was on the North Bend local, and we had a nice number of in-person attendees at Highline Historical Museum and online.

On the 24th of April, additional installations in the series will be presented at Highline Heritage Museum and online. The morning session will be on the Tacoma Connection that ferried passengers to and from Tacoma and East Auburn to meet the Northern Pacific's mainline passenger trains that served King Street Station in Seattle.

The afternoon presentation will be on the development of Northern Pacific Passenger Steam Power from the completion of the transcontinental mainline to the conversion to diesel power – from 4-4-0s through the Northerns.

Visit the PNRA website to register to attend the event in person or online.

To view past events, visit the PNRA YouTube channel.

Seminar of North Olympic Coast Railroading

On March 9th, Cascade Rail Foundation and PNRA presented a free seminar on North Olympic Coast Railroading at Dungeness River Nature Center in Sequim, Washington. The event was live streamed and also recorded for online viewing by people unable to attend in person. The day long event included displays and presentations. After opening remarks and introductions Steve Hauff gave his presentation, "Milwaukee's Peninsula Line or Olympic Division," followed by Allen Miller speaking on "Milwaukee Road in the 1970's." The event concluded with a reunion of former railroad employees, "Reminiscing the Seattle and North Coast."

A follow-up seminar is scheduled for May of this year.

Photo: Tim Repp

Screenshot

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